

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

SAJ-01 MBFR-03 RSR-01 /109 W
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R 281700Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 460

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 8808

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT, MT

SUBJECT: ITALO-MALTESE CONSULTATIONS

REF: VALLETTA 1733 (NOTAL), ROME 8622 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE OF AUGUST 24-25 VISIT TO VALLETTA OF FONOFF POLITICAL DIRECTOR GENERAL DUCCI WAS FREE-WHEELING EXPOSITION BY MINTOFF OF MALTESE VIEWS ON VARIETY OF MEDITERRANEAN SUBJECTS. ACCORDING FONOFF OFFICIAL, MINTOFF HELD FORTH ON FOUR POWER COOPERATION, MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE, RELATIONS WITH LIBYA AND CSCE. MALTESE PREMIER ALSO REQUESTED EARLY MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MORO. END SUMMARY.

2. MINTOFF LED OFF WITH OBSERVATION THAT GHEDAFFI LATELY HAS BECOME NOTABLY COOLER IN HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD FOUR POWER (ITALY, MALTA, LIBYA, TUNISIA) MEETINGS ON MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION. ACCORDING MINTOFF, GHEDAFFI RECENTLY TOLD MALTESE THAT ITALIANS ARE MERELY FRONTING FOR NATO AND US AND, THEREFORE, IN THE FUTURE LIBYA WOULD TEND TO RELEGATE FOUR POWER MEETINGS MORE AND MORE
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TO LOW LEVEL TECHNICAL MEETINGS.

3. PROCEEDING FROM PREMISE OF REDUCED LIBYAN INTEREST IN FOUR POWER COOPERATION, MINTOFF THEN RAISED WITH DUCCI IDEA OF POSSIBLE CONFERENCE OF WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES INCLUDING SPAIN, FRANCE, ITALY, MAGHREB COUNTRIES AND, OF COURSE, MALTA. ACCORDING FONOFF OFFICIAL, MINTOFF CLAIMED IDEA AS HIS OWN, IGNORING FACT THAT SIMILAR SCHEME (HOWEVER, WITH MALTA'S PARTICIPATION STATUS IN DOUBT) HAD BEEN SUGGESTED BY FRENCH ABOUT A YEAR AGO.

4. ON MALTESE-LIBYAN RELATIONS, MINTOFF NOTED THAT GHEDAFFI LATELY HAS BEEN ACTING LIKE AN OLD TIME GANGSTER AND THAT BILATERAL RELATIONS HAD BECOME LESS EASY.

5. TURNING TO CSCE, MINTOFF RESTATED THE FAMILIAR ARGUMENT OF THE STRONG CONNECTION BETWEEN SECURITY IN EUROPE AND MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY. THEN, ALLUDING TO THE CONFERENCE DIRECTLY, HE ASSERTED THAT THE SUBJECT OF THE MIDDLE EAST SHOULD BE A MAJOR ITEM OF DISCUSSION AND THAT IF CERTAIN NON-MEDITERRANEAN CSCE PARTICIPANTS REFUSED TO AGREE, THEN THE MEDITERRANEAN PARTICIPANTS SHOULD THREATEN TO REFUSE TO SIGN FINAL CSCE DOCUMENTS. IN RELATING FOREGOING, FONOFF OFFICIAL OBSERVED THAT MINTOFF'S LATEST WORDS WERE COMPLETELY AT A VARIANCE WITH HIS EARLIER ASSURANCES THAT SUBJECT OF MIDDLE EAST COULD BE AVOIDED AT CSCE AND THAT ALGERIAN AND TUNISIAN REPS, IF ACCORDED RIGHT TO SPEAK, WOULD IN FACT ESCHEW THIS ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF GENERAL STATEMENTS ON MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY.

6. IN DISCUSSION OF NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE (REPORTED SEPTEL), MINTOFF TOLD DUCCI THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO STOP OVER IN ROME TO MEET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MORO EITHER EN ROUTE TO OR ON RETURN FROM CONFERENCE. DUCCI AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT SUCH MEETING WOULD BE DESIRABLE AND SAID HE WOULD TRY TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS. FONOFF SOURCE ADDED THAT SPECIFIC TIME FOR MEETING NOT YET ESTABLISHED BUT HE EXPECTED THAT IT WOULD DEFINITELY TAKE PLACE. VOLPE

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